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SUBJECT: RUSSIA'S THOUGHTS ON THE DPRK'S RETURN TO SIX
PARTY TALKS

Classified By: Ambassador John Beyrle for reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S) In a December 1 meeting with Ambassador Beyrle, Deputy Foreign Minister Alexeksey Borodavkin spoke about his recent trip to North Korea where he met with North Korean DFM Kung Sok-un. Borodavkin predicted that it would be difficult to bring North Korea back to the negotiating table; he confided that he was not optimistic.

¶2. (S) Borodavkin traveled to Pyongyang November 25 with Sergey Mironov, Chairman of the Federation Council. While Borodavkin conveyed Russia's hope that the DPRK was ready to rejoin the talks, the North Koreans instead focused on the path to a normalization of relations with the U.S.: a peace treaty formally ending the war, a reduction in U.S. forces on the Korean peninsula, the cessation of U.S.-ROK military exercises in the ROK, and an end to U.S. carriers, submarines, and military aircraft carrying nuclear weapons entering the ROK. The DPRK might also require the lifting of sanctions before returning to the Six-Party Talks. Borodavkin admitted that he was unsure if the North Koreans saw resolution of these issues as preconditions for, or as the end result of, negotiations. If it were the latter interpretation, it seemed likely that the North Koreans were ready to return to serious negotiations. The former interpretation, however, did not bode well for the future of the talks.

¶3. (S) Borodavkin commented that some North Korean decision makers realized that they were in control of their destiny and that negotiations could eventually lead to normalized relations. With others, the level of suspicion is so high they will require guarantees up front before returning to the table. The Ambassador noted that Special Envoy Bosworth's upcoming visit to Pyongyang is meant to bring North Korea back to the table and that our expectations for North Korea, and our commitment to the Six-Party Talks, have not changed. Borodavkin welcomed Ambassador Bosworth's planned visit to Moscow December 14 and said he hopes he will have time to meet him.
Beyrle